



PRESS RELEASE

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Rockford Fire Offers Fire Safety Tips for Holiday Season Cooking

ROCKFORD, IL – According to the United States Fire Administration (USFA), “an estimated 2,000 Thanksgiving Day fires in residential buildings occur annually in the United States, resulting in an estimated average of five deaths, 25 injuries, and \$21 million in property loss each year. The leading cause of all Thanksgiving Day fires in residential buildings is cooking.”

“On Thanksgiving and throughout the holiday season, many of us spend our day cooking large meals. This means that we have to be even more careful than usual since around 40 percent of structure fires and fire-related injuries are cooking-related,” says Division Chief Matthew Knott. “In many of the fires that extended beyond the cooking area, there were no smoke detectors present. These fires would have been identified and contained much sooner if the proper precautions were taken.”

The USFA and the Rockford Fire Department recommend some simple tips, so residents can help keep our community safe this holiday season.

- Make sure there are working smoke alarms on every level of your home, outside each sleeping area, and in every bedroom. Test smoke alarms monthly and replace them if they are 10 or more years old.
- Keep a close watch when cooking. Never leave cooking food unattended.
- Keep oven food packaging and other combustibles away from burners and heat sources.
- Heat cooking oil slowly and watch it closely; it can ignite quickly.
- Don't wear loose sleeves while working over hot stove burners - they can melt, ignite or catch on handles of pots and pans, spilling hot oil and other liquids.
- Have a "kid-free zone" of at least 3-feet around the stove and in areas where hot foods or drinks are prepared or carried.

- Keep a lid nearby to smother small grease fires. Smother the fire by sliding the lid over the pan and turn off the stovetop. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cool.
- If you are deep-frying a turkey, make certain that it has been completely thawed prior to placing it in the fryer, and do not perform any outdoor cooking inside the garage.

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